

Teachers Dig In**Dig In to the Bible**

- Read: Genesis 37–50
- In This Passage: Joseph has a lot of ups and downs. His brothers throw him into a well and then sell him into slavery. He works his way up to be a respected servant in Egypt, only to be lied about and thrown in jail. He earns respect there, only to be forgotten. Finally, Pharaoh asks Joseph to interpret a dream and then puts him in charge of collecting food to feed the whole country. God has a big picture through Joseph's life of ups and downs.
- Bible Point: God has a big picture through ups and downs.
- Summary Verse: "And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them" (Romans 8:28).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God has a big picture through ups and downs.* Kids can easily identify with the idea of emotional ups and downs. They experience them regularly. And they also experience events over which they have no control. Help kids see that even in the "down" times of life, they can trust God to have a big picture in mind.
- Think About: What have been some of your greatest ups in life? downs? How can you look back and see God working, even through the down times?

Dig In to Prayer

- Pray that God will help kids trust him as Joseph did, even when life gets hard.

Quick Tip

- One way your kids can experience God's love is through fearless conversation. Fearless conversation means kids can speak openly, without judgment. It means *you* set the example of sharing from your heart. It means kids feel like their thoughts and doubts are welcome. This lesson might bring up some tough questions about down times in life. Practice fearless conversation as tough questions arise.

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids move around the room and simulate Joseph's ups and downs.

Supplies

- Bible
- whiteboard or large sheet of poster board
- dry-erase marker or regular marker
- rainbow colors of crepe paper
- black crepe paper
- masking tape

Easy Prep

- If you're using poster board, hang it on the wall.
- Make a large masking-tape circle on the floor, big enough to hold all of your kids.
- Hang several long strips of black crepe paper from the ceiling to block off a corner of the room as a jail cell.
- Place the colorful crepe paper in another corner of the room.



OBJECT LESSON

Kids experiment to see how an orange can both sink and float in water.

Supplies

- oranges or clementines (2 for every 3-4 kids)
- several clear bowls or bins (1 for every 3-4 kids)
- water
- paper towels

Easy Prep

- Fill the bowls or bins $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water.



CRAFT

Kids make yo-yos.

Supplies

- cardboard (food packaging works great)
- pens or pencils
- cups
- plastic soda bottle caps (1 per child)
- mini Glue Dots
- pennies (8 per child)
- string
- scissors
- markers
- stickers

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



MUSIC VIDEO

Kids sing songs of praise to God.

Supplies

- "I Will Trust You" (watch or download [here](#))
- "My God Is Powerful" (watch or download [here](#))
- "God Is for Me" (watch or download [here](#))



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO

Kids watch a video and discuss the Bible Point.

Supplies

- “Work It Out” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))



TAKE-HOME

Kids receive a take-home page about the lesson.

Supplies

- this week’s “Dig In @ Home” handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Add your church announcements to the “Dig In @ Home” handout.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids thank God while standing up and then squatting down.

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let’s keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

Thank kids for coming.

Just for fun, have kids pat the people next to them on the back.

Make announcements.

Introduce new kids.

Celebrate birthdays by having kids say “Feliz cumpleaños” (fay-LEES coom-play-AHN-yos) (“happy birthday” in Spanish).

Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we’re going to learn that God has a big picture through ups and downs. We’ll learn about some ups and downs in the life of a guy in the Bible named Joseph.**

Share

Tell kids about the high point and low point of *your* week.

Have kids form pairs and tell their partners about the high points and low points of *their* week.

After partners have discussed, ask two or three kids to share with the whole group what they talked about in their pairs.

Summarize

Open a Bible to Genesis 37 and show kids the passage. Say: **All of us experience ups and downs in our lives. But even when we’re feeling down, we can trust that God has a big picture through ups and downs. That means God sees everything from start to finish, even though we can’t. Let’s look in the Bible to see how God had a big picture through Joseph’s ups and downs. The Bible is amazing! It’s full of incredible stories, and they’re all true! God gave us the Bible so we can know him better and hear from him. Let’s pray and ask to hear from God as we explore the Bible.**

Pray, thanking God for having a big picture through ups and downs.

**Supplies**

- Bible
- whiteboard or large sheet of poster board
- dry-erase marker or regular marker
- rainbow colors of crepe paper
- black crepe paper
- masking tape

Easy Prep

- If you're using poster board, hang it on the wall.
- Make a large masking-tape circle on the floor, big enough to hold all of your kids.
- Hang several long strips of black crepe paper from the ceiling to block off a corner of the room as a jail cell.
- Place the colorful crepe paper in another corner of the room.

Be at Home

Say: **Today we'll discover that God has a big picture through ups and downs. Let's look at an example of good and bad things happening.**

Stand at the whiteboard or poster board and be ready to make a chart. As you tell kids about some ups and downs from your life, you'll draw one continuous line that goes up to signify good things and down to signify bad things. Take about one minute.

Say: **Sometimes good things happen, and sometimes bad things happen. We all have high points and low points. Let's look at a guy in the Bible who had quite a roller coaster of good and bad things happening. We'll see how God had a big picture through his ups and downs.**

Have kids gather in the corner with the colorful crepe paper. Say: **Joseph's story begins at his home. He was one of 12 brothers, and his older brothers hated him. They were jealous because their dad liked Joseph better and bought Joseph a fancy, colorful coat.**

Have all of the kids drape a few different colors of crepe paper over their shoulders to represent the coat.

Ask: • **Tell about a time you were jealous of someone.** Share your own example first, and then have kids share in pairs.

Say: **Joseph also had dreams that all of his brothers were bowing to him. He told his brothers about his dreams, and they got mad. So they decided to throw him into an empty well, kind of like a pit.**

Squat-Walk to the Well

Say: **Let's travel to the well. Since this was a low point for Joseph, we'll squat as we walk over to the well.**

Lead kids in squat-walking over to the tape circle. Have kids sit in this "well."

Ask: • **Joseph's brothers were mad at him; tell about a time someone got mad at you.** Have kids share in pairs. After partners have discussed, ask a couple of kids to share with the whole group.

Crawl to Potiphar's House

Say: **Joseph's brothers were so mad that they wanted to kill him! One of his brothers convinced the rest to sell Joseph as a slave instead. They took him out of the well and sold him to slave traders going to Egypt. That's another low point for Joseph, so let's crawl to Egypt.**

Lead kids in crawling to a new location in the room. Have kids remain on their hands and knees when they get to the new spot.

Say: **Being a slave isn't a good thing. You might have to clean (pause for kids to act out cleaning) or cook (pause for kids to act out cooking), and no one pays you. But listen to this.**

Read Genesis 39:2-3.

Say: **Even though Joseph was at a low point, God was with him. Remember, God has a big picture through ups and downs. Joseph's owner was Potiphar. Potiphar's job was captain of the guard for the king of Egypt, Pharaoh. Potiphar got to see God at work in Joseph. Because of that, Potiphar put Joseph in charge of the whole house. Joseph was still a slave, but he wasn't treated as badly as usual. Considering everything that's happened so far, that's kind of a high point! Let's stand up.** Have kids stand as they discuss this question.

Ask: • **Tell about a time you did a good job at something.** Have kids share in pairs. After partners have discussed, ask a couple of kids to share with the whole group.

Army Crawl to Jail

Say: **Things were looking up for Joseph. But then Potiphar's wife got mad at Joseph, and she told a lie that got him thrown in jail! Jail is definitely a low point, so let's army crawl on our bellies to jail.** Lead kids in army crawling to the jail corner of the room, where the black crepe paper is hanging.

Have kids remain on their bellies.

Say: **Raise your hand if someone has ever said something mean or untrue about you.** Pause.

Joseph was in trouble for something he didn't do! That's a really low point. But while he was in jail, God did something good for Joseph. Let's find out what it was.

Read Genesis 39:21-23.

Say: **God had a big picture through Joseph's ups and downs. Even though Joseph was at a really low point, God helped him find favor with the guard. Let's stand up to show that this was a higher point for Joseph.** Have kids stand.

Ask: • **What's something you'd like to be in charge of?** Have kids call out a few answers.

Say: **While Joseph was in charge of the prison, he met a cupbearer and a baker—two people who used to work for Pharaoh. They had strange dreams, and God helped Joseph know what the dreams meant. The cupbearer's dream meant he would get his old job back, working for Pharaoh. And it came true!**

Joseph asked the cupbearer to tell Pharaoh about him, but the cupbearer forgot. So Joseph stayed in jail. Let's sit because that's a lower point of Joseph's story. Have kids sit.

Ask: • **Tell about a time someone forgot a promise to you.** Have kids share in pairs.

Hop to the Palace

Say: **The cupbearer forgot about Joseph for a while. Then one day Pharaoh had a dream, and he wanted to know what it meant. That reminded the cupbearer of Joseph. He told Pharaoh about Joseph, and Pharaoh sent for Joseph. God has a big picture through ups and downs.**

What a high point! As we journey to the palace, let's hop so we're nice and tall. Lead kids in hopping to a new place in the room, which will be the palace.

Say: **Pharaoh's dream turned out to be important. God helped Joseph see that the dream meant Egypt would have seven years where they'd grow a lot of food, but after that they'd have seven years with very little food.**

Because Pharaoh knew this ahead of time, he knew to save some of the food from the first seven years so they'd have enough to last when not much grew. He needed someone to be in charge of collecting all that food, and guess who he picked! Joseph! Joseph was a top ruler of Egypt!

Wow! This is a major high point! Put your hands in the air and jump up and down. Allow time. Then have kids remain standing to discuss this question.

Ask: • **Tell about a time something awesome happened to you.** Have kids share in pairs. After partners have discussed, ask a couple of kids to share with the whole group.

Say: **Pharaoh's dream was right. After seven years with plenty of food, there were seven years with very little. Joseph was able to provide enough food so everyone could eat.**

Soon other nearby countries ran out of food. People from those countries came to Egypt for food. And some of those people who came were Joseph's brothers!

Joseph's brothers didn't recognize him. After all, they didn't expect him to be a ruler of the country. But Joseph recognized them. He forgave them, and he said some things that can help us when we go through hard times.

Read Genesis 45:7 and Genesis 50:20.

Ask: • How might things have turned out if any one of the bad things hadn't happened to Joseph?

- What bad things have turned out okay for you?

Say: Joseph had an important job in Egypt. He saved a lot of people from starving to death. But he had to go through a lot of low times as part of this picture. Even in those times, he knew God has a big picture through ups and downs.

Like Joseph, we can have a good attitude even when life isn't going well. We can try our best when times are low, and we can trust that God has a big picture through ups and downs.



OBJECT LESSON

Ups and Downs

[10 min]

Supplies

- oranges or clementines (2 for every 3-4 kids)
- several clear bowls or bins (1 for every 3-4 kids)
- water
- paper towels

Easy Prep

- Fill the bowls or bins $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water.

Make a Guess

Say: **How do we know if objects will float up or sink down in water? With a game of Sink or Float!**

Form mixed-age groups of three or four kids. Each group needs access to a bowl or bin of water. Give each group two oranges or clementines.

Ask: • **Do you think these oranges will sink or float in water?** Invite kids to call out their guess. **Let's test and see!**

Test a Peeled Orange

Tell groups to peel one of their oranges. To build excitement, have the entire group shout together, "Sink or float!" and then drop the peeled oranges into the water and observe what happens. The oranges should sink.

Ask: • **Why do you think the peeled orange sank?**

Say: **Even though peeling the orange made it lighter, it sank. Hmm. Let's try the other one.**

Test an Unpeeled Orange

Tell groups to leave the peel on the second orange. Again, build anticipation by having everyone shout together, "Sink or float!" and then drop the oranges into the water. With the peel still on, the oranges should float.

Ask: • **Why do you think this orange floated?**

Say: **An orange's peel contains tiny air pockets that help it float.**

Talk About It

Ask: • **How is an orange peel like God's presence in our lives?**

Say: **When bad things happen and life wants to drag us down, God's presence surrounds us and pulls us up. It's like we're surrounded with pockets of God's love! God has a big picture through ups and downs.**

Ask: • **Tell about a time life was tough and you felt like you were sinking.** Share an example from your own life to begin the conversation.

• **How does it help to know God has a big picture even when we feel like we're sinking?**

Say: **Did you know that the smell of an orange is thought to have a calming influence when people are stressed or upset? Even when life feels out of control, God has a big picture through ups and downs. He loves us and is for us no matter what.**

If you'd like, invite kids to peel and enjoy the floating oranges.



Supplies

- cardboard (food packaging works great)
- pens or pencils
- cups
- plastic soda bottle caps (1 per child)
- mini Glue Dots
- pennies (8 per child)
- string
- scissors
- markers
- stickers

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Make Yo-Yos

Set out supplies. Then have kids follow these directions. Older kids will need to help younger kids with most of the steps, but allow plenty of time for preschoolers to decorate their cardboard circles.

- Trace the mouth of a cup twice on a piece of cardboard to make two matching circles.
- Cut out the cardboard circles.
- Use Glue Dots to attach a bottle cap to the middle of one circle.
- Use Glue Dots to attach the other circle to the opposite side of the bottle cap.
- Knot a string tightly around the bottle cap, and then wind it around the cap. The string should be long enough for the yo-yo to drop but not so long that the yo-yo hits the ground.
- Use Glue Dots to secure four pennies on each side of the yo-yo. The pennies should be fairly evenly spaced. This is important to give the yo-yo enough weight to work properly.
- Decorate the cardboard with markers and stickers.

Play With the Yo-Yos

Have kids practice using their yo-yos. Yo-yos can be difficult for kids to learn to use, but with practice

kids can get them to go down and come back up at least once.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What do you think makes your yo-yo come back up?**

Say: **There's enough force on the string when you drop the yo-yo that it can pull back up. But it only works if you're holding on to the string. If you dropped the whole yo-yo, including the string, it would only go down.**

It's kind of like that with God. Because he's holding on to us during our "down" times, he can use them for good and bring us back up to good times. He never lets go of us.

Ask: • **How can you tell God was with Joseph during his down times?**

Say: **God has a big picture through ups and downs. When you face the downs in your life, think about your yo-yo and remember that God is holding on to you, ready to help you back up.**

Have kids take their yo-yos home and show them to their families and friends as they share how God has a big picture through ups and downs.



MUSIC VIDEO

I Will Trust You

[10 min]

Supplies

- “I Will Trust You” (watch or download [here](#))
- “My God Is Powerful” (watch or download [here](#))
- “God Is for Me” (watch or download [here](#))

Tip

- Don't have internet in your classroom? That's okay! You can download the videos before class using the “download” button at the link provided, or just purchase this quarter's DVD [here](#).

Sing Songs to God

Sing the three songs in any order.



Supplies

- “Work It Out” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))

Tip

- Don’t have internet in your classroom? That’s okay! You can download the videos before class using the “download” button at the link provided, or just purchase this quarter’s DVD [here](#).

Discuss and Watch “Work It Out”

Say: **We’ve been learning that God has a big picture through ups and downs. Let’s watch a rap version of God’s big picture for Joseph.**

Watch “Work It Out.”

Ask: • **This song says, “He went from rags to riches, the prison to the palace.” How have you seen your life turn around from bad to good? Share your own example first.**

• **This song says, “Wherever God put him, Joseph always did his best.” What does it look like to do your best even when life is in a “down” time?**

• **We know Joseph’s whole story, from beginning to end. What do you wish you knew about God’s big picture for your future?**

Say: **God has a big picture through ups and downs. We can’t usually see the whole picture. Joseph served God even in his “down” times and trusted that God would bring some “up” times to his life.**



TAKE-HOME

Dig In @ Home

[0 min]

Supplies

- this week's "Dig In @ Home" handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Add your church announcements to the "Dig In @ Home" handout.

Distribute a copy of the "Dig In @ Home" handout to kids as they leave, or email it to parents during the week.



Pray Up, Pray Down

Stand Up

Have kids stand up. Say: **God has a big picture through ups and downs. Let's thank him for the ups in our lives. Think about something great that's happened this week. Let's take turns thanking God aloud for those things.** Start the prayer by thanking God for your ups, and then allow time for kids to take turns praying.

Squat Down

Have kids squat down. Say: **God has a big picture through ups and downs. We don't usually thank God when we're going through down times. But since we've learned that we can trust his big picture, let's thank him for our downs. Silently thank God for something bad in your life right now.** Allow time.

Pray

Pray: **God, thank you that we can trust you, even when we feel down. Thank you that you can work bad things in our lives into good results. As you say in your Word, you cause all things to work together for the good of those who love you and are called according to your purpose. Thank you that you have a big picture through ups and downs. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Thank kids for coming, and encourage them to come back next week.